



HOMELESSNESS IN SOUTHSIDE HAMPTON ROADS

**A REPORT OF THE SOUTHSIDE
MAYORS AND CHAIRS
REGIONAL TASKFORCE**

September 2005

Homelessness in Southside Hampton Roads

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In February, 2005, Mayor Paul D. Fraim of Norfolk and Mayor Meyera Oberndorf of Virginia Beach asked to raise the issue of homelessness with their colleagues in a monthly meeting of the Southside Hampton Roads Mayors and Chairs (of County Boards of Supervisors.) The Mayors and Chairs group indicated interest in pursuing the issue and on March 21, 2005, Mayor Fraim wrote to each of his colleagues to request that they assign a high-level administrator to serve on a Regional Taskforce on Homelessness. The group was formed and adopted the following principles/statement of purpose:

1. To provide a forum for communicating, sharing ideas, and developing regional strategies to address homelessness in Southside Hampton Roads.
2. To produce a Report on Regional Homelessness to be delivered to local elected officials and City/County executives.
3. To plan and present a Regional Summit on Homelessness based on feedback from the Mayors and Chairs, which will highlight Best Practices and support local and regional strategic planning efforts to end homelessness in the region.
4. To deliver “early wins” by identifying projects that are low or minimal cost that can be implemented regionally to prevent or reduce homelessness (e.g. partnership with the Hampton Roads Realtors on eviction prevention or affordable housing databases; partnership with the United Way on regional infrastructure projects to support homeless prevention programs.)
5. To bring forward issues of regional concern that may be addressed through the collaborative environment of the Taskforce. (e.g. Consistent counting of the homeless in every locality to ensure comparability by utilizing best practices identified by HUD; implementation of HMIS.)

The following report represents the fulfillment of commitment #2 identified above.

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II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

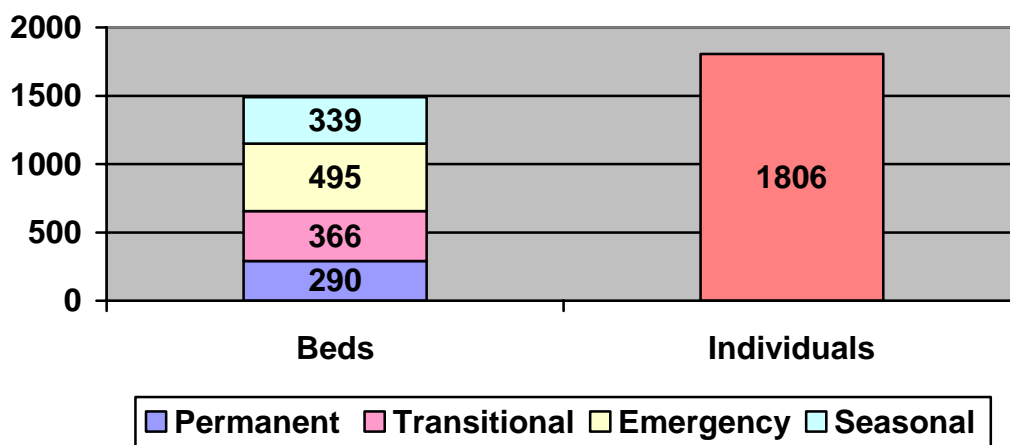
With the cost of housing in Southside Hampton Roads rising quickly, those at the bottom of the wage ladder are at greater risk of homelessness. Many cities in Southside Hampton Roads are seeing larger numbers of homeless than in past years and the emergency shelter system is bursting at the seams. Waiting lists in the dozens are typical in the family shelters and the largest single men's shelter sleeps 25-75 men on its lobby floor every night, as it is completely full.

The Point In Time Count revealed that there were more than 1,800 homeless persons in Southside Hampton Roads in late January, 2005. Of those, nearly 400, or 22%, met the definition of "chronic," having been homeless for at least the past 12 months or four or more times in the previous three years. Nationally, the proportion of chronically homeless is estimated at 10%.¹

The annual count also revealed that 41% (735 individuals) of the 1,806 homeless persons in the region were families with children.

There are 1,352 shelter beds in the region available year-round (including permanent supportive housing and transitional housing) and another 339 available only during the winter months. There are relatively few permanent supportive housing beds (19% of total beds.)

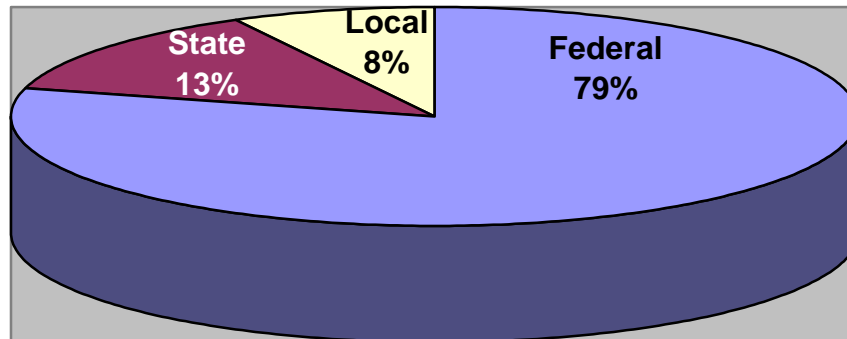
S. Hampton Roads Persons Seeking Shelter vs. Non-Seasonal Bed Capacity: Jan. 2005



In fiscal year 2005, \$8.9 million in Federal, State, and local grants were provided to homeless service providers in Southside Hampton Roads. The vast majority of these funds are Federal (79%).

¹ Testimony of Phil Mangano, Executive Director of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, July 2004, before the U.S. House of Representatives, Financial Services Committee.

Public Funding for Homeless Programs in Southside Hampton Roads 2004



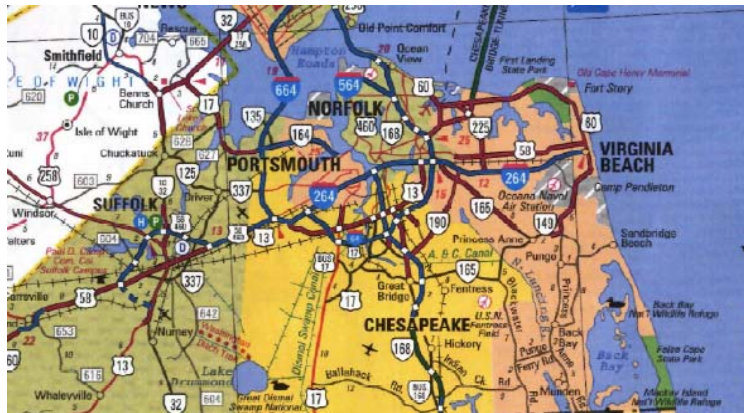
Homelessness has far-reaching costs ranging from the economic to societal. The economic costs are estimated at \$32 million in emergency room, hospitalization, acute psychiatric care, jails and prisons. The societal costs include the fact that children who experience homelessness have high rates of developmental delays and often become homeless as adults. There were at least 1,300 children in public schools in Southside Hampton Roads in the 2003-2004 school year who were identified as homeless (either living in shelters, off-season hotels, or doubled up).

Nationally, research indicates that 30% of all children in foster care have been placed there due to a lack of housing². Further, adults who experience homelessness often have untreated addictions or mental illness. Without shelter and support, these individuals pose public safety and health concerns.

² Harburger, Deborah S. "Reunifying Families, Cutting Costs: Housing-Child Welfare Partnerships for Permanent Supportive Housing." Child Welfare, September/October 2004. A publication of the Child Welfare League of America.

III. THE SCOPE OF HOMELESSNESS IN SOUTHSIDE HAMPTON ROADS

Southside Hampton Roads consists of the cities of Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Franklin and the Counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton. The problem of homelessness in the region is as varied as the landscape. It extends from central urban cores to rural agricultural areas. It is visible on city park benches and invisible in off-season hotel rooms or tents in the woods.



Noted homeless researcher and analyst Martha Burt of The Urban Institute estimates that 10% of a

city's poor will experience homelessness in an average year.³ In Southside Hampton Roads, that translates to nearly 11,000 people. Considering there were approximately 2,600 evictions for nonpayment of rent in the City of Norfolk alone in 2004 (which involved a larger number of people), Burt's estimate seems plausible.⁴

An important region-wide trend is the rapid escalation of housing prices and the difficulty in obtaining subsidized housing or even unsubsidized affordable rental housing units. From Virginia Beach to Suffolk, there is a clearly defined need for affordable housing units. The average rental rate in Hampton Roads is now \$745.⁵ In order to afford an average apartment in our area, a person would need to earn over \$15/hour or work over 100 hours/week at minimum wage. With the average disability benefit just over \$500/month and welfare benefit for families with children at \$300/month, the very low-income and disabled individuals face tremendous difficulties securing housing.

The chart on the following page describes the monthly earnings needed to "afford" the average rental housing unit in Hampton Roads. HUD has determined that housing is affordable when housing costs are no more than 30% of a household's monthly income. As discussed above, the average rent in the region is \$745/month; therefore a household would need to earn \$2,483/month in order to afford an average rent. The "typical" TANF earnings in the chart refer to the average monthly earnings for persons working their way off welfare in the region.⁶

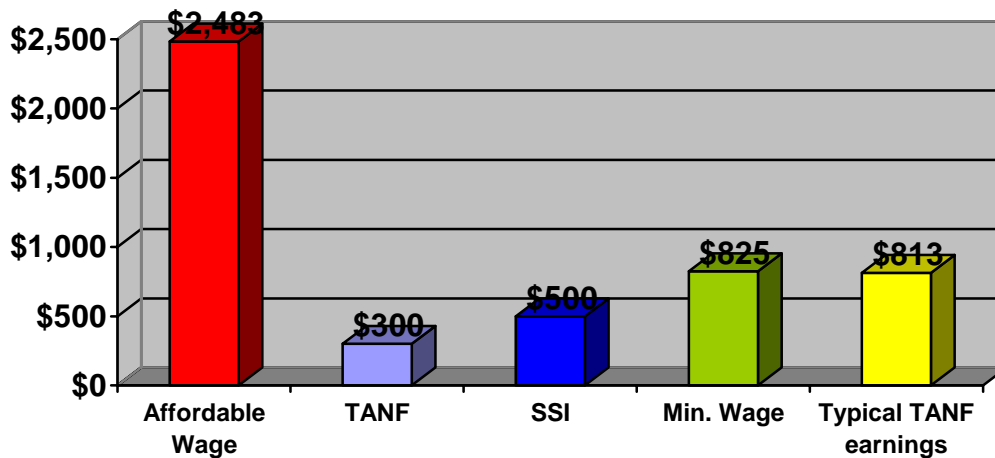
³ Burt, Martha et al "Helping America's Homeless: Emergency Shelter or Affordable Housing." The Urban Institute Press, Washington, DC 2001.

⁴ Data obtained from the Norfolk Sheriff's office.

⁵ "2005 Market Survey." Old Dominion University Center for Real Estate and Economic Development, Norfolk, Virginia.

⁶ Source: Virginia Department of Social Services, VIP Report, July 2005.

Affordable Housing Wage Compared to Typical Monthly Income Available



Scarcity of affordable units leads to “doubling up” conditions where families and individuals frequently rely on friends and relatives for housing – a necessary but unstable situation that frequently leads to homelessness and victimization. There are hundreds if not thousands of individuals doubled up in Hampton Roads who are not eligible for inclusion in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)’s definition of homeless, but who are actively seeking shelter.

The region is also home to a high number of returning prisoners each year, with the City of Norfolk experiencing the highest number of any jurisdiction in the State in 2004.⁷ A recent Hampton Roads regional reentry conference highlighted the relevance of this topic to the issue of homelessness. A history of incarceration is a common element in the background of a large proportion of the homeless – nationally 45% of current and 55% of formerly homeless.⁸ While we do not have data specific to Hampton Roads, the City of Richmond found 65% of the chronically homeless have a history of incarceration. When ex-offenders return home, they frequently face family stress and discrimination in their search for employment and housing. These factors can quickly compound into further criminal activity, substance abuse, and homelessness.

⁷ Keegan, Sinead and Solomon, Amy “Prisoner Reentry in Virginia.” The Urban Institute. October 2004

⁸ Burt

SNAPSHOT: VIRGINIA BEACH

The City of Virginia Beach lacks adequate shelter space to meet the demand for individuals and families who are homeless. Being placed on a waiting list for shelter space or other housing programs (other than adults who access emergency shelter during the winter months) is the typical response these folks encounter when seeking services. Adults are able to use the Lighthouse Center's - Day Support Program but must return to the streets once the center closes its doors every evening. Families with children face the prospect of foster care placement if adequate housing is not secured to ensure the safety of the children. During the summer months, those who are homeless blend in with beach goers at the oceanfront masking the scope of the problem in the resort city.

Neighbors in the Bayside area of the city recently found a couple sleeping in a city park during the day. The couple has lived in Virginia Beach for two years but recently lost their apartment and they had been homeless for three weeks. They had never been homeless before and were embarrassed by their circumstances. Both have disabilities and sought space at various shelters without success. Since the park closes at sunset, the couple walks throughout the night and sleeps during the day. The neighbors paid for lodging at a hotel and provided other assistance until the couple received their disability checks. Once their money runs out, this couple faces the prospect of being on the streets again if they are unable to access shelter or safe, affordable housing.

Impact

Increasing numbers of homeless children are identified through the Public Schools system. Data from the school system, though incomplete, identifies 1,300 children in Southside Hampton Roads schools living in unstable environments (e.g. hotels, doubled up, emergency shelters, etc.), including 559 in Norfolk and 489 in Virginia Beach.⁹

Homeless children experience learning and behavioral problems at a significantly higher rate than their peers who are not homeless.

School teachers in Virginia Beach identified 80 children living in off-season hotels in the resort area during the winter. These unstable living conditions have very real implications in the classroom.



The table on the next page describes the number of children in each school district in Southside Hampton Roads that were identified as homeless or potentially homeless in the 2003-2004 school year.

⁹ Data from Project HOPE Virginia, Office on Homeless Education.

School Division	Housing						
	Shelter/Trans. Housing	Doubled Up	Unsheltered	Hotels/ Motels	Other	Unknown	Total
Suffolk Public Schools	20	13	2	32	0	0	67
Franklin City Public Schools	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Chesapeake City Public Schools	10	80	5	9	0	0	104
Isle of Wight County Public Schools	0	5	0	7	0	7	19
Southampton County Public Schools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Portsmouth City Public Schools	21	35	0	1	0	0	57
Norfolk City Public Schools	292	16	39	80	66	66	559
VBCPS, School Social Work Svcs.	296	72	5	89	27	0	489
Total	639	221	51	218	93	74	1296

Service capacity issues combined with little coordination among providers across city lines have a significant impact on efforts to end homelessness. While homeless persons frequently seek shelter or assistance through more than one provider across multiple jurisdictions, there is no mechanism to share information among providers within each locality and across the region. Homeless persons and their advocates must “shelter shop” to find a vacant bed, spending hours on the phone often exacerbating a crisis situation.

Another issue raised by representatives to the taskforce is that in certain areas in the region, the homeless problem is “invisible.”

SNAPSHOT: NORFOLK

Mayor Paul D. Fraim has led the City of Norfolk to become the second city in Virginia to institute a 10 year plan to end homelessness and the first city in Virginia to establish a City Department focused exclusively on this task. The City's 25-member Commission to End Homelessness has worked for one year to develop the plan which can be found on the City's website at: <http://www.norfolk.gov/Press/Blueprint.pdf>

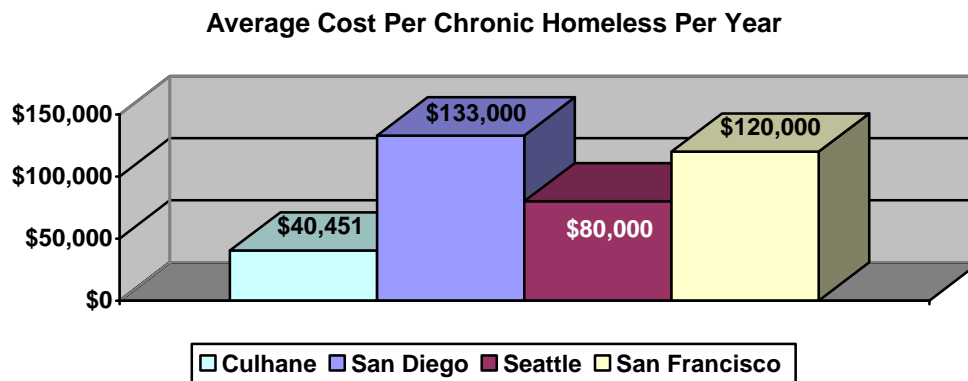
In April, 2004, the Norfolk Department of Human Services (DHS) initiated a Homeless Action and Response Team or HART. This team consists of eligibility workers and social workers whose primary mission is to intervene in or prevent family homelessness. Eligibility workers help connect homeless persons to Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (cash welfare), and other State and Federal benefit programs. The social workers provide family stabilization services and ensure that children are safe and protected. In addition, one social worker is dedicated to working with adults, despite the limited resources available through DHS for this population.

When the team first began, it was anticipated that roughly 20 families would be served by HART as that was the approximate number of homeless families served by a family stabilization team under the Child and Family Services division. The first month, over 700 calls for assistance were received by the team. Over time, as it became clear that DHS wouldn't automatically pay people's rent, the calls have slowed down to approximately 100/month. The HART team has utilized existing Federal and State benefit programs to prevent roughly 550 families from becoming homeless at a cost of roughly \$550,000/year (in Federal and State funds).

The Cost of Homelessness

Homelessness and chronic homelessness in particular, has high societal and personal costs. A chronically homeless person is frequently jailed, has health or substance abuse conditions that result in numerous hospitalizations and emergency room visits, as well as the cost of shelter placements.

Several studies have been conducted to quantify the cost of the chronically homeless across the country. (See chart on next page.) Taking the average of these studies, (\$83,250), the cost of the chronically homeless in Southside Hampton Roads could be as much as \$32 million per year.



The personal cost of homelessness is equally devastating. Homeless persons are typically the victims of crime; they are estranged from their families and friends (60% of homeless adults have children, with whom most have no contact)¹⁰; often have untreated substance abuse and mental illness; and the children who experience homelessness suffer the consequences for years with poor school achievement and social isolation.

¹⁰ Burt.

SNAPSHOT: CHESAPEAKE

A 28 year-old single, working mother of two daughters under the age of 12 became homeless due to a domestic violence incident. Her 11 year old is disabled and receives SSI. Her six year old has ADD. She and her children had been staying with her grandmother who asked her to leave due to overcrowding in the home. She has no High School diploma and has a desire to complete her GED to obtain a better salary than the one she receives while working in a fast food restaurant. She entered transitional shelter following her stay in an emergency shelter and is working toward completion of her GED as well as financial goals including paying off debt and establishing a savings program. Without the assistance of the transitional program, she would continue to be homeless or would need to "double-up" with a family member to "make ends meet".

How Many Homeless Are In Southside Hampton Roads?

In order to receive critical federal funding under the McKinney Vento Act for homelessness initiatives, HUD requires a one day count of the homeless in each jurisdiction. This counting process is known as the Point In Time count. In 2005, Southside Hampton Roads jurisdictions counted 1,806 homeless persons.

HUD also requires that agencies receiving funding under McKinney Vento implement a centralized database to capture unduplicated numbers of homeless throughout the year. Each locality in the Southside is in various stages of implementing their database known as the Homeless Management Information System or HMIS. We expect this to be an important data source in the future. Until then, the Point In Time count remains the only resource for quantifying the breadth of homelessness in our region.

Federal guidelines on how the count may be conducted and who may be considered "homeless" have varied over time and each jurisdiction conducts the count in slightly different ways. For example, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Norfolk did a one day count while Virginia Beach conducted a count over two days and the City of Chesapeake conducted a count over three days. Each locality faced challenges in conducting the count from having to cover broad geographic or rural areas (the Western Tidewater count covered an 1,100 square mile area in 24 hours,) to the refusal of many homeless individuals to participate in the count.

Each locality's count included visits to shelters and feeding programs, and visits to places the homeless usually congregate. Chesapeake conducted interviews in person and by telephone with an over 95% response rate. Chesapeake and Portsmouth counters offered gift bags of toiletries, gloves, etc. as an incentive to participate. Virginia Beach "advertised" in advance with flyers in English and Spanish etc.

SNAPSHOT: PORTSMOUTH

"Ray" is 34 years old. He is currently unemployed and does not have permanent housing. He lives in low rent motels or boarding houses until he runs out of money. He usually shows up at the shelter close to the end of each month. Ray has not held a job longer than 6 months for the past 15 years. Ray is an unskilled but motivated employee. His previous employers say he started out well but eventually (after 4 to 6 weeks) reported to work late or not at all. He often responds in inappropriate ways when tasked by supervisors. Ray drinks alcohol in moderation and does not use illegal drugs. Ray is well known in the social services community. During his fifteen (15) years on the streets, he has been assigned to nearly all the caseworkers at the Department of Behavioral Healthcare and the VA Department of Vocational Resources. Each time, counseling and support services provide promising short-term (1 to 3 months) results, but no one has achieved long-term success (6 to 12 months). His occasional panhandling annoys Olde Towne residents and business owners.

Populations not counted: In previous years, persons actively seeking shelter were included in Norfolk's count. During the 2005 Point In Time count, 144 individuals fell into this category but were not included in the overall count.

As indicated above, each locality made note of numerous individuals who refused to participate in the survey.

In Virginia Beach, two groups that were counted but not reported to HUD were individuals and families utilizing hotels at the resort area of the city and those on waiting lists for housing. Four hundred and three adults and children were living in hotel rooms where rates rise significantly during the summer. Typically, these individuals leave the city or camp in tents, double-up with others, sleep in their cars, or live on the streets during the tourist season. Those on waiting lists for shelter will likely be included in subsequent counts as HMIS becomes operational to produce an unduplicated count of those who are homeless. If those sub-populations were added to the most recent Continuum submission, the number of homeless persons would total 1,389, approximately 400 being children.

2005 POINT IN TIME COUNT

Part 1: Homeless Population	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
1. Homeless Individuals				
Chesapeake	0	0	95	95
Norfolk	307	72	64	443
Portsmouth	83	49	90	222
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	2	0	23	25
Virginia Beach	122	32	227	<u>381</u>
Total				1,166
2. Homeless Families w/ children				
Chesapeake	3	5	26	34
Norfolk	22	24	0	46
Portsmouth	12	14	4	30
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	4	1	0	5
Virginia Beach	19	37	21	<u>77</u>
Total				192
2a. Persons in Homeless Families w/ children				
Chesapeake	7	14	186	207
Norfolk	70	87	0	157
Portsmouth	47	47	16	110
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	10	4	0	14
Virginia Beach	62	119	66	<u>247</u>
Total				735
Subtotal (lines 1+2a only)				
Chesapeake				207
Norfolk				600
Portsmouth				332
Suffolk/Western Tidewater				39
Virginia Beach				<u>628</u>
TOTAL				1,806

Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
1. Chronically Homeless			
Chesapeake	0	4	4
Norfolk	63	26	89
Portsmouth	69	33	102
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	17	*	17
Virginia Beach	37	133	<u>170</u>
Total			382
2. Severely Mentally Ill			
Chesapeake	10	0	10
Norfolk	43	*	43
Portsmouth	15	20	35
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	0	*	0
Virginia Beach	31	*	<u>31</u>
Total			119
3. Chronic Substance Abuse			
Chesapeake	12	0	12
Norfolk	67	*	67
Portsmouth	40	23	63
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	0	*	0
Virginia Beach	53	*	<u>53</u>
Total			195
4. Veterans			
Chesapeake	8	0	8
Norfolk	50	*	50
Portsmouth	30	18	48
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	0	*	0
Virginia Beach	50	*	<u>50</u>
Total			156
5. Persons with HIV/AIDS			
Chesapeake	0	0	0
Norfolk	27	*	27
Portsmouth	1	1	2
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	0	*	0
Virginia Beach	3	*	<u>3</u>
Total			32
6. Victims of Domestic Violence			
Chesapeake	6	14	20
Norfolk	32	*	32
Portsmouth	8	16	24
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	0	*	0
Virginia Beach	20	*	<u>20</u>
Total			96
7. Youth (Under 18 years of age)			
Chesapeake	10	0	10
Norfolk	1	*	1
Portsmouth	2	1	3
Suffolk/Western Tidewater	0	*	0
Virginia Beach	66	*	<u>66</u>
Total			80

SNAPSHOT: NORFOLK

A 30 year old mother of three children ages 15, 11 and 4 was evicted for nonpayment of rent after losing her job recently. Her 15 year old is on dialysis. She and her children have been staying with a friend in public housing although she frequently sleeps outside as she once had a problem with the public housing authority and is worried about jeopardizing her friend's housing. Her only income is the SSI she receives for the 15 year old and she has exhausted her cash welfare benefits. Without securing a safe housing situation soon, she will likely lose her children to the foster care system.

SNAPSHOT: PORTSMOUTH

The Portsmouth Homeless Advisory Consortium (PHAC) meets monthly to marshal resources and coordinate services for the homeless. The 21 dues paying members of PHAC are various non-profit agencies and City Departments. Through PHAC, funds are secured to provide services to Homeless with Shelter + Care (sponsored by Portsmouth DBHS) as well as four (4) non-profits that comprise Portsmouth Self-Sufficiency Project (PSSP). Phase 1 of the PSSP now houses the daytime job training/life skills services of Oasis Opportunity Center. Phase 2 of PSSP, when funded and built, will provide a drop in center/one-stop shop for services to the homeless. Unfortunately, persons (homeless or not) who loiter, panhandle and "hang out" together at the library and various locations annoy merchants and residents, especially within the Olde Towne and downtown sections of the City. This is not a favorable situation for promoting tourism and recruiting visitors and might adversely affect homeless advocacy. Nonetheless, Portsmouth recognizes the need for collaboration and cooperation within the region to maximize utilization of resources (federal/state/local/private) to efficiently attempt to end, or at least significantly reduce, homelessness by 2012. The newly formed Portsmouth Homeless Taskforce held its first meeting on August 11th. This group comprised of a team of citizen volunteers, elected officials, educators, and City staff who will partner to streamline efforts to end homelessness in the City of Portsmouth.

Other measures of homelessness:

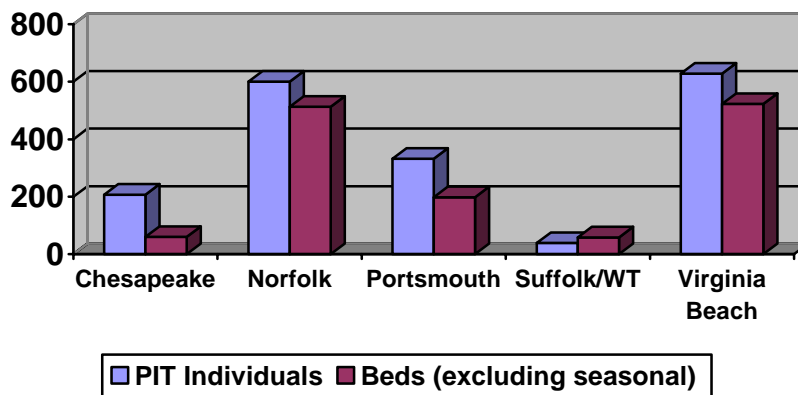
As the Point In Time count is acknowledged to be an inaccurate measure of homelessness, it is important to consider other measures of homelessness. Noted homeless research Martha Burt of the Urban Institute has identified that roughly 10% of a city's population living under the poverty level will experience homelessness in a given year.¹¹ For Southside Hampton Roads, this translates to nearly 11,000 individuals experiencing homelessness throughout the year.

¹¹ Burt, Martha R. "What Will It Take to End Homelessness." The Urban Institute, Washington, DC. October 1, 2001.

IV. HOUSING AND SHELTER CAPACITY BY CITY

Homeless service providers in the region are able to meet only a fraction of the demand for service and in many localities the number of homeless is increasing markedly. Emergency shelters in Chesapeake and across Hampton Roads frequently turn away callers seeking assistance. Resources for unattached homeless adults are extremely scarce with the emergency shelters making up the bulk of services available in the region. Most of the single homeless individuals have disabilities, often some combination of physical, psychiatric, and substance abuse.

**Persons Seeking Shelter vs. Capacity
By City: Jan. 2005**



The Community Services Board (CSB) and Department of Behavioral Health Care operate the Shelter Plus Care program which provides permanent supportive housing to homeless consumers with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders. There are approximately 60 Shelter Plus Care units in Southside Hampton Roads and there are hundreds of homeless individuals who qualify for the program.

Details of Shelter Capacity by City (Data from the 2005 Continuum of Care)

City	Activity type	Beds
Chesapeake*	Permanent Supportive Housing	11
Chesapeake	Transitional	39
Chesapeake	Emergency Shelter	10
Chesapeake	Emergency Shelter – Seasonal	50
Subtotal, Chesapeake	(excludes seasonal)	60
Norfolk	Permanent Supportive Housing	134
Norfolk	Transitional	132
Norfolk	Emergency Shelter – Year Round	247
	Emergency Shelter – Seasonal,	165

City	Activity type	Beds
Norfolk	Overflow, or Voucher	
Subtotal Norfolk	(excludes seasonal beds)	513
Portsmouth	Permanent Supportive Housing	39
Portsmouth	Transitional	87
Portsmouth	Emergency Shelter – Year Round	72
Portsmouth	Emergency Shelter – Seasonal, Overflow, or Voucher	60
Subtotal, Portsmouth	(excludes seasonal beds)	198
Suffolk, Western Tidewater	Permanent Supportive Housing	0
Suffolk, Western Tidewater	Transitional	4
Suffolk, Western Tidewater	Emergency Shelter – Year Round	54
Suffolk, Western Tidewater	Emergency Shelter – Seasonal/Overflow	0
Subtotal Suffolk, W.Tidewater	(excludes seasonal)	58
Virginia Beach	Permanent Supportive Housing	145
Virginia Beach	Transitional	225
Virginia Beach	Emergency Shelter – Year Round	153
Virginia Beach	Emergency Shelter – Seasonal, Overflow, or Voucher	64
Subtotal, Virginia Beach	(excludes seasonal)	523
	Total Permanent Supportive Housing Beds	329
	Total Transitional Housing Beds	487
	Total Emergency Shelter Beds	536
	Total Seasonal or Overflow Beds	339
	Grand Total (excluding Seasonal)	1,352

**It should be noted that Chesapeake supplements its limited amount of housing by contracting with providers in other cities to house Chesapeake homeless citizens.*

V. OVERVIEW OF FUNDING OF HOMELESS INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN SOUTHSIDE HAMPTON ROADS

Overall, \$8.9 million in public funding was provided to homeless prevention and intervention programs in Southside Hampton Roads in fiscal year 2005. Nearly 80% of these funds are Federal, with 59% coming from one particular Federal grant program, the Continuum of Care program authorized under the McKinney Vento Act. Another 13% is State funding and the remaining 8% is provided by local government.

Continuum of Care Funding Information: As mentioned above, the Federal McKinney Vento Act provides the bulk of funding for homeless service provision in the United States. The total amount received in Southside Hampton Roads in fiscal year 2005 was \$5.2 million. The tables below illustrate the amount of Continuum of Care funding each Southside Hampton Roads jurisdiction received over the past two years.

Chesapeake 2004 Award:

0

Chesapeake 2003 Award

Chesapeake Community Services Board	Shelter+Care	\$89,160
Community Resources Network, Inc.	TH	\$173,290
	Total:	\$262,450.00

Norfolk 2004 Award

Virginia Supportive Housing	SRO	\$846,720.00
Salvation Army Women's HOPE Center	SHPR/Transitional	\$847,812.00
FORkids, inc.	SHPR	\$149,166.00
The Planning Council	HMIS	\$50,533.00
The Salvation Army	SHPR	\$208,250.00
St. Columba	SHPR/Transitional	\$136,500.00
Barrett Haven	SHP	\$182,593.00
YWCA/Norvoca	SHP	\$39,281.00
	Total:	\$2,460,855.00

Norfolk 2003 Award

Virginia Supportive Housing	SRO	\$1,821,600.00
FORkids, inc.	SHPR	\$250,076.00
The Salvation Army	SHPR	\$208,250.00
Children's AIDS Network Designed for Interfaith Involvement (CANDII)	SHP	\$329,628.00
	Total:	\$2,609,554.00

Portsmouth 2004 Award

Virginia Supportive Housing	SRO	\$423,360.00
Portsmouth Area Resources Coalition, Inc.	SHPR	\$102,312.00
Portsmouth Area Resources Coalition, Inc.	SHPR	\$53,550.00

Portsmouth Area Resources Coalition, Inc.	SHPR	\$120,421.00
Department of Behavioral Health Care	SHPR	\$69,013.00
Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless, Inc.	SHPR	\$55,650.00
Oasis Commission of Social Ministry of Portsmouth	SHPR	\$250,069.00
Total		\$1,074,375.00

Portsmouth 2003 Award

Oasis Opportunity Center	SHPR	\$750,206.00
Department of Behavioral Health Care	Shelter+Care	\$294,960.00
Total		\$1,045,166.00

Virginia Beach 2004 Award

Virginia Supportive Housing CAMG Inc.	SRO	\$846,720.00
CAMG, Inc.	SHPR	\$346,667.00
CAMG Inc.	SHPR	\$111,014.00
CAMG Inc.	SHPR	\$20,288.00
Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation	SHPR	\$249,704.00
Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation	SHPR	\$90,747.00
Total		\$1,665,140.00

Virginia Beach 2003 Award

Judeo-Christian Outreach Center	PH	\$332,994.00
Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation	TH	\$249,705.00
Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation	TH	\$12,600.00
Community Alternatives Management Group	PH	\$346,667.00
Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation	HMIS	\$150,010.00
Total		\$1,095,976.00

Suffolk/Western Tidewater 2004 Award:

0

Suffolk/Western Tidewater 2003 Award:

0

The City of Suffolk currently does not have a funded Continuum of Care program. During 2004 the Suffolk Shelter for the Homeless applied for designation as a participating Continuum jurisdiction through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. However, the application was not approved due to a lack of cohesion among participating service providers. For 2005, the City of Suffolk has served as the lead agency for the Western Tidewater Continuum of Care Council (WTCCC) – which currently contains over twenty-five (25) member organizations. The City contracted with

a professional consulting firm to complete a viable application for designation beginning in 2006.

The current application proposes two separate, but equally viable, projects; a program to implement a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) among area service providers and a new transitional housing facility to serve men. As a result of the current initiatives of the Department of HUD, the City is confident the WTCCC will receive adequate funding to establish a HMIS network. To facilitate the network, the Planning Council of Norfolk, Virginia will host the system for all applicable service providers with an estimated date of implementation of October, 2006.

The established pro-rata for the entire Western Tidewater region is approximately \$122,000 based upon the 2005 figures. Accordingly, the financial resources available through the Continuum program are inherently limiting. As a result of funding limitations, the development of a HMIS system is one of the most cost-effective means of combating homelessness. The system would then allow area service providers, who are bound by limited resources themselves, to better collaborate and promote efficiency.

Other Funding and Resources: In addition to the Continuum of Care grants, the region received \$3.7 million in Federal (\$1.8 million), State (\$1.2 million), and local (\$680,000) funds for homeless services in fiscal year 2005. The table attached in Appendix A describes non-Continuum of Care grants awarded to homeless service providers in fiscal year 2005. Funds provided by local Community Services Boards, jails, state prisons, public school system, and hospitals to care for the homeless are not captured in this report.

VI. STATE INITIATIVES

Governor Mark Warner initiated the Virginia Interagency Council on Homelessness (VIACH) several years ago to develop and implement a 10-year plan to end homelessness in the Commonwealth of Virginia. He later revised his goals to ensure that progress was made within 5 years so that his administration could be held accountable for its progress. VIACH consists of two working groups: The Policy Council and the Advisory and Action Committee. The Policy Council consists of state level staff and local representatives who oversee the development and implementation of the plan and work with Advisory Committee on its execution. Katie Kitchin of the City of Norfolk's Office to End Homelessness serves as the representative for the Virginia Municipal League to the Policy Council. The Advisory and Action Committee is a broader group consisting of state and local representatives as well as formerly homeless representatives and providers. This group assists with the implementation of the plan, shares information about programs, funding and services, and serves in an Advisory capacity to the Policy Council and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Thus far, VIACH has successfully implemented several elements of the plan resulting in increased capacity across the Commonwealth for permanent supportive housing.

VII. Gaps & Issues, Proposals

Given the capacity needs described in earlier sections of this report, the following table identifies the priority needs of each locality and the plan to meet those needs.

City	Population Served	Description of the Issue	Proposals or Initiatives to Address It
Chesapeake	Low income families	Affordable Housing Barriers	Expansion of the supply of low-cost, safe, permanent housing options and the removal of barriers for access. Chesapeake has recently convened an affordable housing taskforce; The CCH Chairman is a member of the task force and will assist in the development of policies that will increase affordable housing for all segments of the community, including the chronic homeless.
Chesapeake	Low income families, persons with disabilities	Shelter Plus Care	Improved utilization of vouchers obtained through Chesapeake's Shelter Plus Care grant (8 of 10 vouchers currently in use: the remaining two will be leased by June 30, 2005.
Chesapeake	Affordable housing for very low-income and disabled.	SRO	Continue to seek funding for the SRO II project.
Chesapeake	Low income families	PATH Program	Met with State officials to advise of interest if PATH funds become available.
Chesapeake	Low income families	Regional Homeless Plan	Will continue to work and promote regional issues and strategy.
Norfolk	Affordable housing for the very low income and disabled	The rental housing market has grown increasingly out of reach for those with very low incomes (30% or below of area median income).	Virginia Supportive Housing will begin construction on a new 60 unit permanent housing project for disabled single adults in the Fall of 2005.
Norfolk	Families with children in emergency shelter	Shelter stays have grown longer each year as families struggle to relieve debt	Norfolk Department of Human Services will initiate a Rapid Exit demonstration project to quickly move families with children from emergency shelter to permanent

City	Population Served	Description of the Issue	Proposals or Initiatives to Address It
			housing and support them to maintain their own housing for 6 months to 1 year.
Norfolk	Affordable housing for very low income families with children	The rental housing market has grown increasingly out of reach for those with very low incomes (30% or below of area median income).	The establishment of a Low Income Housing Trust Fund is a top priority of the Commission to End Homelessness. This potential resource could be used to develop additional housing capacity.
Portsmouth	Affordable housing for the very low income and disabled	Need for affordable housing units.	Virginia Supportive Housing will begin construction of a 60 unit Single Room Occupancy facility of which Portsmouth will support 6 rooms.
Portsmouth	Chronically homeless individuals	Individuals discharged from hospitals, jails, psychiatric or detox centers are often released into homelessness	Create a Discharge Policy that will connect individuals with supportive housing; explore transitional housing facility for ex-offenders.
Portsmouth	Chronically homeless individuals and families	Insufficient emergency and transitional housing as well as supportive services	Provide transitional housing, supportive services and job readiness/employment services.
Portsmouth	Low income families	Insufficient supply of low-cost permanent, safe housing	Coordinate CDBG, HOME, SPARC and VHDA funds to foster affordable housing; encourage construction of mixed-income neighborhoods and explore the effect of inclusionary zoning
Portsmouth	Homeless Individuals and families	Lack of a uniform information system to coordinate services	Encourage and support agencies to participate and share data through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
City of Suffolk	Homeless & potentially homeless persons	Western Tidewater does not have an HMIS system	HMIS program proposed under 2006 Continuum application
City of Suffolk	Homeless men	Suffolk does not have a shelter for men.	Men's transitional housing facility proposed under 2006 Continuum application
City of Suffolk	Low income persons & families	Need for affordable housing units	Utilizing CDBG, HOME, and other private sources to foster affordable housing. Creation & employment of Affordable Housing Taskforce
Virginia Beach	Chronically homeless individuals; and families and	Lack of affordable housing can cause and perpetuate	Establish a Housing Trust Fund that would provide permanent housing options

City	Population Served	Description of the Issue	Proposals or Initiatives to Address It
	individuals with very low incomes	homelessness for these populations	based upon nationally recognized models
Virginia Beach	Chronically homeless individuals; and families and individuals who are homeless or at imminent risk thereof	Lack of adequate support services can lead to homelessness for these populations	Within the frame- work of permanent housing programs, include adequate support services to assist in the acquisition and retention of housing (e.g. Employee Assistance Programs and Early Intervention Programs for those facing eviction)
Virginia Beach	Chronically homeless individuals	When discharged from hospitals, jails, psychiatric facilities, or detox centers, this population is often released into homelessness	Create a Discharge Planning Policy that ensures persons being discharged from institutions are connected to supportive housing
Virginia Beach	Chronically homeless individuals; and families and individuals who are homeless	Services are often scattered across a large geographical area and the processes to obtain them may be complex making it difficult for these populations to access the help that they need	Develop and implement a single point of entry to access comprehensive services for persons who are homeless

VIII. Regional Response

The Regional Taskforce group seeks to identify specific projects that may be accomplished through collaboration that would benefit region-wide issues related to homelessness. The following suggestion(s) were identified by the group:

Affordable Housing Database

Census data reveals a large number of affordable housing units in Hampton Roads. However, these units are typically not listed in classified ads or the multi-listing service when they are vacant. Case managers and low-wage earners must spend hours cold calling property managers and owners.

Across the country, non-profits and governmental organizations have developed databases to capture and share information on non-traditional rental housing opportunities. Such a project would be a tremendous benefit to shelter providers and case managers working with the homeless to secure permanent housing. Further, as providers and localities move toward "Housing First" strategies, identification of affordable rental housing is a critical and essential element. Grant opportunities exist to support such an effort and there is substantial interest among private industry to work on this project.

Regional Centralized Intake/Homeless Management Information Systems

Southside Hampton Roads is a very porous region where our citizens move with ease among different localities. However, our service delivery structure remains tied to specific local jurisdictions. Further, homeless individuals may utilize services in more than one jurisdiction but information is not typically shared that may impact the effectiveness of services for the client. We may wish to consider a regional intake, or at a minimum, connect the various HMIS systems together in order to share information among homeless service providers. Presently, the City of Richmond works with the Counties of Henrico and Chesterfield in this way. Such a regional approach would not be easy, considering that even within a single jurisdiction providers have chosen not to share information. However, it is a project worth exploring as it presents an opportunity to streamline administration of programs and improve service delivery to the homeless.

In August 2005, a regional workgroup of local HMIS administrators and users was created to share information among Southside Hampton Roads localities about system management and troubleshooting. The group will also work to ensure that each local database is consistently developed and administered to allow regional data collection and data sharing in the future.

Regional Summit

Plans are underway to convene a regional Summit on Homelessness in the fall of 2005. The Summit will provide an opportunity to share information about best practices both in the area and across the country. Mr. Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness has been invited and is expected to participate in the event.

Regional Single Room Occupancy Projects

Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH), a Richmond-based non-profit agency, is currently finalizing contracts to develop the first in the nation, regional Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing project for the homeless. The facility will permanently house 60 homeless, disabled individuals with 42 units reserved for Norfolk, 12 for Virginia Beach, and 6 for Portsmouth. The project has been funded with Federal, State, and local funds and is expected to be completed by the fall of 2006.

VSH is currently searching for potential sites to locate a second regional SRO.

IX. CONCLUSION

The problem of homelessness in Southside Hampton Roads is straining existing service capacity. The growing scarcity of affordable housing in the region, combined with declining Federal housing subsidies and services indicates that homelessness will be on the rise in the coming years absent concerted efforts to reverse the trend.

Despite over \$8.9 million per year in mostly Federal and some State and local funding, it appears that we remain swimming upstream against a rising tide of homeless persons. Our funds remain predominantly targeted toward emergency shelter programs, a strategy which research tells us will only perpetuate the problem.¹² While we are beginning to invest new money in proven strategies to eliminate homelessness, we still have miles to go before we will see the results. It will take each locality, providers, and the entire community working together to reach our goal of ending homelessness.

¹² Culhane, Dennis; Metraux, Stephen; and Hadley, Trevor. "Public Service Reductions Associated with Placement of Homeless Persons with Severe Mental Illness in Supportive Housing." Housing Policy Debate, Fannie Mae Foundation 2002.

X. City Contact Persons for More Information

Chesapeake Edwina Ricks Management Analyst, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Youth & Family Services City of Chesapeake 306 Cedar Rd. Chesapeake, VA 23322 (757) 382-6191 (757) 382-6372 (fax) ericks@iga.city.chesapeake.va.us	Norfolk Katie Kitchin Director Office to End Homelessness City of Norfolk 810 Union Street, Suite 306 Norfolk, VA 23510 (757) 664-4488 (757) 664-4424 (fax) Catherine.kitchin@norfolk.gov
Portsmouth Robin Herbert CPD Administrator City of Portsmouth 801 Crawford Street Portsmouth, VA 23704 (757) 393-8614 ext 6255 (757) 393-5475 (fax) herbertr@portsmouthva.gov	Suffolk Justin D. Brooks Community Development Coordinator 441 Market Street, P.O. Box 1858 Suffolk, VA 23439 (757) 923 – 2085 (757) 923 – 2091 (fax) jdbrooks@city.suffolk.va.us
Western Tidewater Western Tidewater Continuum of Care Council (WTCCC) Andrea Fowler Morris - Chairperson Suffolk Shelter for the Homeless 400 Finney Avenue Suffolk, VA 23435 (757) 934 – 1353	Virginia Beach John C. Boylan Homeless Policy & Resources Coordinator City of Virginia Beach Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Phone: (757) 426-5761 Fax: (757) 426-5766 jboylan@vbgov.com

XI. APPENDIX: DETAILS OF NON-CONTINUUM OF CARE FUNDING/RESOURCES

City	Funding Source	Amount
Chesapeake	Child Services Coordinator Grant (Federal portion)	\$6,458
Chesapeake	Community Development Block Grant (Federal)	\$87,477
Chesapeake	Emergency Shelter Grant (Federal)	\$4,910
Chesapeake	Human Services Grant (local)	\$101,476
Chesapeake	Child Services Coordinator Grant (State portion)	\$3,792
Chesapeake	Shelter Support Grant (State)	\$15,250
Norfolk	Community Development Block Grant (Federal)	\$160,500
Norfolk	Emergency Shelter Grant (Federal)	\$236,000
Norfolk	Shelter Support Grant (State): SSG/FSG	\$209,888
Norfolk	Homeless Intervention Program (State)	\$266,500
Norfolk	Human Services Grant (local)	\$156,900
Norfolk	Child Services Coordinator (State)	\$61,000
Norfolk	TANF/VIEW (State/Federal, 25/75)	\$500,000
Portsmouth	Shelter Support Grant (State)	\$131,500
Portsmouth	Childcare for Homeless Children (State)	\$15,000
Portsmouth	HOME (Federal)	\$260,000
Portsmouth	Emergency Shelter Grant (Federal)	\$79,926
Portsmouth	General Fund (Local)	\$281,198
Portsmouth	Social Services (State)	\$38,152
Portsmouth	Empowerment 2010 (Federal)	\$10,000
Portsmouth	Social Services (Federal)	\$114,456
Portsmouth	Child Services Coordinator (Federal portion)	\$16,065
Portsmouth	Child Services Coordinator (State portion)	\$9,435
Suffolk	Emergency Shelter Grant (Federal)	\$8,226
Suffolk	State Shelter Grant, FSG (State)	\$77,218
Suffolk	Community Development Block Grant (Federal)	\$65,000
Suffolk	Child Services Coordinator (State)	\$20,500
Virginia Beach	Emergency Shelter Grant (Federal)	\$107,169
Virginia Beach	HOME (Federal)	\$200,000
Virginia Beach	Homeless Intervention Program (State)	\$143,000
Virginia Beach	Shelter Support Grant (State)	\$174,211
Virginia Beach	Homeless Emergency Program (City)	\$50,196
Virginia Beach	Community Opportunity Grant (City)	\$96,976
Virginia Beach	Child Services Coordinator (State)	\$60,750
Total	Federal (excluding Continuum of Care)	\$1,804,533
Total	State	\$1,171,906
Total	Local	\$680,746
	Grand Total	\$8,857,555

